

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, April 15, 1993

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Seminary teacher receives letter with pocketful of blessings

By David Fite

FORT WORTH, Texas — The letter that arrived from First Church, Cordele, Ga., contained a surprise — a small pocket New Testament given up for lost that I had purchased the year I was ordained.

The fact that I had it now was a second gift because I had given it up for lost once before when our mission service in Cuba ended.

The last four years in Cuba were difficult. I had spent 44 months in the prison system along with my wife's father and 50 Cuban Baptist pastors and church leaders. We had been sentenced to prison by the communist state for engaging in "ideological diversionism."

Mission service came to an end when the government released me from prison and granted permission to leave. We appeared at the airport for the final processing and to have our luggage cleared. I added to my bag a couple of trinkets I made in prison and a book by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*.

Margaret added a book given to her by my mother when our first son was born. The security officer began to search each piece of luggage. When he came to my bag he picked up the trinkets with some interest and returned them to the bag; then the book by Bonhoeffer. He laid it aside with the book he had taken from Margaret's bag, repeating emphatically that we were not allowed to take any books from the country.

The search of the luggage continued for a half hour or more. We were told to empty our pockets. The officer examined what Margaret had in her purse and what the boys had in their pockets and then

turned his attention to what I had taken out — a handkerchief, empty billfold, comb, and the small pocket New Testament.

He picked up the New Testament and laid it on top of the books, then examined each of the other items. Then he looked up to verify that no other officers were observing him. Opening out my handkerchief he quickly slipped the New Testament under it and pushed all the items toward me.

"Put these in your pocket. Hurry!" he said in a low voice. The search ended soon after, and we were cleared for boarding with the New Testament in my pocket.

The pilgrimage of that small book did not end there, however. The letter from First Church,

Cordele, indicated they had received the book from a Mr. Rufus Pevehouse of Bellaire, Texas. He found the book on the back seat of a rental car he had driven in San Antonio. The only identification in the book besides my name was the date and place of my ordination — First Church, Cordele. Pevehouse had mailed the Bible to Cordele, and someone in the church remembered that years ago my father had been the church's pastor. The New Testament was sent to me, and I still have the book in my pocket.

God uses persons in unusual settings to bestow blessings.

Fite is director of continuing education at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Out of Africa...

By Bill Bullington

Thank the Lord for the 1,000+ missionaries serving faithfully in Africa. I have just returned from a trip to 11 countries in Africa. Our missionaries are burdened for the lost and are engaged daily in spiritual warfare to win them to Christ. Pray for boldness and spiritual power in their witness.

Thank God for the new believers and pray for their spiritual maturity as they gather in local churches.

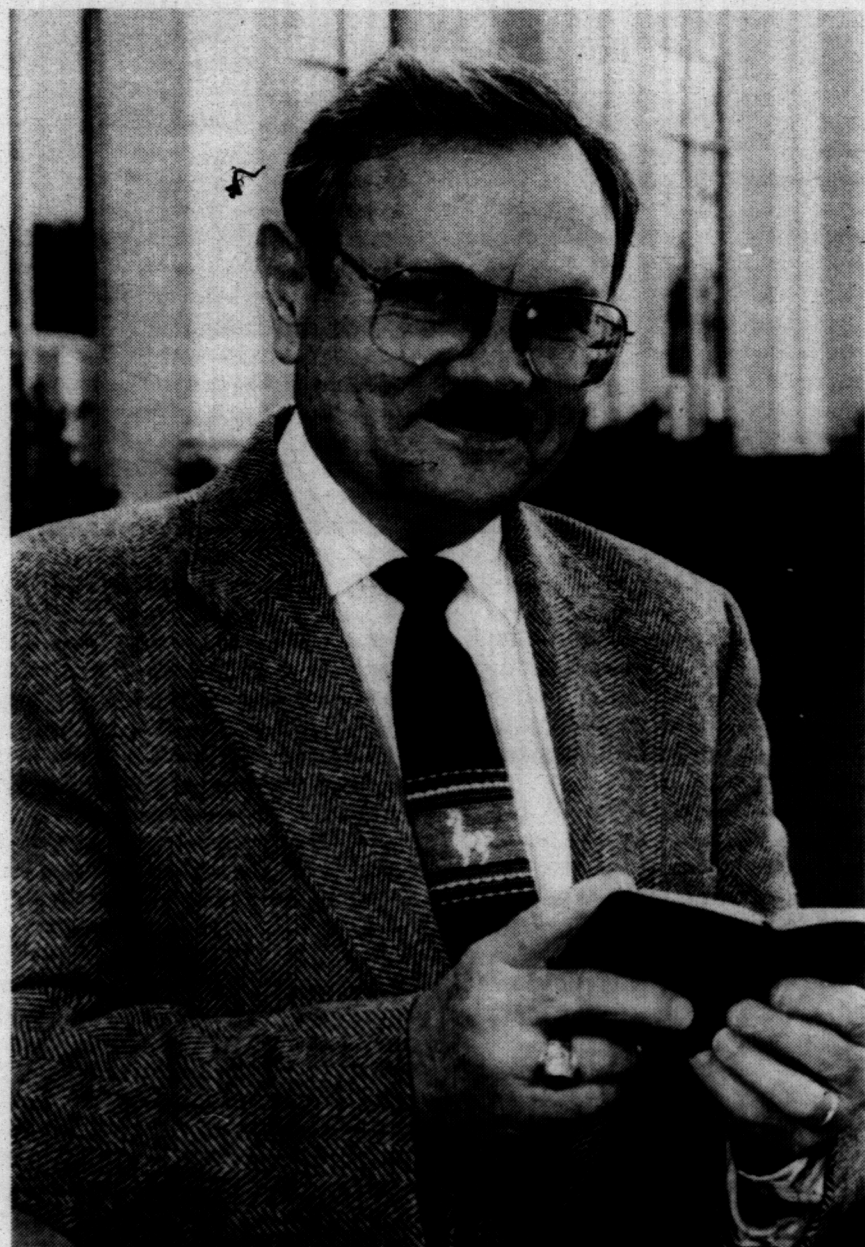
Join me in thanking the Lord for the rains in the southern part of Africa. You may have been among those who responded to the call for prayer for rain. God has answered abundantly, and there is hope for a good harvest. Continue to pray for the northeastern area, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia, where the rains are now due and are greatly needed.

Pray for peace in Somalia. My impression from what I saw in Mogadishu is that efforts to distribute food are making a difference.

Pray for peace in Angola, Zaire, Togo, and Liberia where war and violence hang over the people. Pray for a mighty work of God. Remember the missionaries who remain and those who had to leave.

We are grateful for your prayers. Please keep in touch with the FMB PrayerLine (1-800-395-PRAY) for worldwide prayer concerns.

Bullington is FMB regional vice president for Africa.



David Fite holds the New Testament sent to him from his pastor father's church in Cordele, Ga. Fite's Bible was with him when Castro overthrew the Cuban government and imprisoned him for nearly four years. He was able to carry the Bible out of Cuba when he was released, only to lose it in the U.S. The story, however, has a happy ending.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

What to read

A Case for Abstinence — Arguments for refraining from alcohol use in any form. Contact: Christian Action Commission (CAC), Mississippi Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

The Bible Speaks on Alcohol — Scriptural foundation for total abstinence. Contact: CAC

Issues and Answers: Alcohol — Explanations for many of the most-asked questions about alcohol and other drug abuse. Contact: CAC.

Christian Lifestyle for Youth: Drugs — Guide for young people to help them make appropriate decisions when confronted with alcohol and other drugs. Contact: CAC.

Alcohol Awareness: A Study Guide for Teenagers and Their Parents — Six-session study that includes suggestions and learning activities for groups, families, and individuals. Contact: CAC. (\$4.25 per copy)

Drug Awareness: A Guide for Youth and Youth Leaders — Five-session program designed to help young people make and implement Christian decisions concerning drugs. Contact: CAC. (\$1.95 per copy)

Healthy People 2000 — reduction of alcohol-related health problems. Contact: National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852.

Toward a Drug-Free Generation: A Nation's Responsibility — identification of drug-free schools, campuses, and model programs, with alcohol use among young people as an integral component. Contact: NCADI.

Youth and Drugs: Society's Mixed Messages — analysis of the confusing messages regarding use of alcohol; description of programs aimed at eliminating alcohol and other drug problems among young people. Contact: NCADI.

Surgeon General's Reports on Alcohol and Youth — Reports include: "Drinking Habits, Access, Attitudes and Knowledge"; "Do They Know What They're Drinking"; "Laws and Enforcement"; "Controlling Alcohol Advertising..."; "Dangerous and Deadly Consequences"; and "Drinking and Crime." Contact: Department of Health and Human Services, 330 Independence Ave. SW, Room 5660, Washington, DC 20201.

—Based on information supplied by CAC and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

What to do

Mad At the Ads — How to challenge alcohol advertising. Contact: Center for Science in the Public Interest, Attention: Alcohol Policies Project, 1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009. (\$4 per copy)

Alcohol and Other Drugs: A Planning Guide for Congregations — How to get religious institutions involved in fighting alcohol and other drug abuse. Contact: Minnesota Institute of Public Health, 417 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103. (\$7.50 per copy)

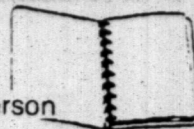
Enforcing underage drinking laws — Techniques that promote strict enforcement of drinking age laws. Contact: Doctors and Lawyers for a Drug-Free Youth, Attention: Tom Radecki M.D., P.O. Box 2653, Champaign, IL 61825.

Project Graduation — Alcohol- and other drug-free activities for students. Contact: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

To help fight alcohol abuse in Mississippi, contact CAC. To find out about the program of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence in your area, call toll-free 1-800-475-HOPE.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson



In-depth Bible study

Many Christians desire a deeper understanding of the Word. They hunger for that freshness, the mercies which are new every day, that feasting on the bread of which the world knows nothing.

How do we get it? Sunday School is good, weekly Bible classes are great, but I speak of an individual or a small group in a more comprehensive study.

The right preparation is the first step. A good study Bible is mandatory. The Disciples Study Bible (New International Version) is preferred by many. The Believers Study Bible (New King James Version), the Thompson-Chain (NIV) are all good. Bible dictionaries, handbooks, and word studies will increase the joy of Bible study. Set the time, place, and get a notebook.

The Bible can be studied by books, doctrines, history, characters, themes, topics, social issues, and basic beliefs. Do not study it to argue nor bring preconceived notions to the study table. Spend time in prayer asking God to illuminate your heart and mind. Let the Holy Spirit make the application. Ask him, "Lord, what is your

message for me today?"

Let the Bible speak to your needs. Human relationships, circumstances, bitter experiences, and daily conflicts can come under the searchlight of his love.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Dwell long upon such words, trusting God to do as he declared. Break out your spiritual wardrobe and prepare to grow. Feasting on the manna is a blessing for the obedient. Your delight will be in the Word, and in his law you learn to meditate day and night. You will be like a tree flourishing by the river, bringing forth fruit at the right time, your leaf will not wither and whatsoever you do shall prosper.

Prepare to spend some money, but not a fortune. Your church library will have some helpful books. The pastor may have other suggestions.

As you grow you may look at how we got our Bible, archeology and the Bible, word studies, geography and the Bible, and commentaries. The Lord has set a banquet table of 66 wonderful books and a real blessing awaits you.

This will be an endless study. The more you drink from this well, the greater your thirst for more. In fact, "those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest."

If you have a computer, you will be enabled to study in a new and powerful way. Individual words, phrases, word combinations, cross references, even in Greek and Hebrew, can be displayed in an electronic Bible study.

In *The Bible and Your Life*, Frank Pollard of First Church, Jackson, tells in the preface of Michelangelo who saw a discarded lump of marble in a builder's yard. It was stained, misshapen, and unattractive. He said to the builder: "Take it to my studio, there is an angel in that marble and I can set him free!" Just so, Jesus can take our weary and misshapen lives and set us free.

"He that abideth in my word...." Never forget "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." The hymn writer caught the idea and wrote: "Show me thy truth concealed, within thy Word, And in thy Book revealed I see the Lord."

April is Cooperative Program month —

God works through CP gifts

By James Austin

Today, we Southern Baptists working together are doing God's work through the Cooperative Program (CP). Southern Baptists form a spiritual work force of millions of Great Commission Christians. Although marked by diversity, we are bound together in spiritual endeavors by a belief that we are laborers together with God in a global enterprise — sharing the gospel with everyone on earth by the year 2000. Voluntary cooperation has been a major factor in the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention from 4,100 churches with 352,000 members at the time of the Cooperative Program's founding in 1845 to more than 38,000 churches with 15 million members in 1993.

Gifts through the CP plan of doing God's work support some 9,000 missionaries and thousands of national and international ministries. We support educational institutions, children's homes, homes for the elderly, hospitals. We broadcast the gospel on radio

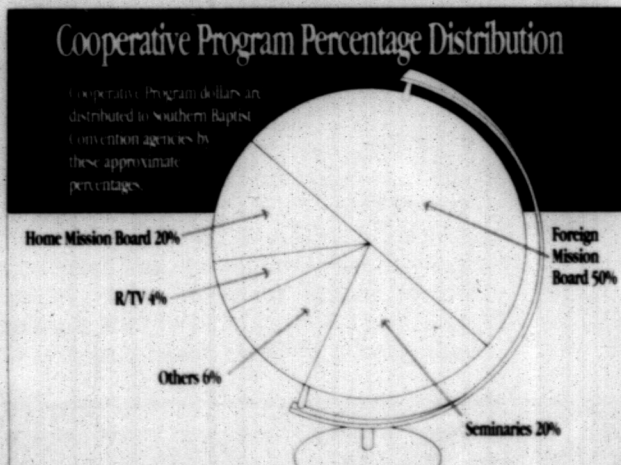
and television. We publish state papers, church literature, and books. We minister through home and foreign mission fields. Pastors, church staffs, and millions of dedicated lay members work as part-

plying them with materials needed to do their work. Southern Baptist missionaries, both in this country and abroad, can work with confidence that support for their families and work will be provided every month.

Without CP money, mission causes cannot survive; equally important, without CP money, the strength of a denominational team effort could be lost. Without a unified giving system such as the Cooperative Program, a crippling inequity in meeting needs could exist.

The Cooperative Program is the most effective and efficient method Baptists have for gathering and distributing dollars to mission causes. It costs less for promotion, postage, bookkeeping, and administration than any other known mission support today.

The Cooperative Program unites missionaries, SBC and state convention staff members, associational workers, church leaders, and church members into one great



ners with the denominational employees endeavoring to bring the lost to God through Jesus Christ.

The CP helps Southern Baptists do what no other mission giving plan has ever accomplished. It effectively enables Baptists to put into action bold mission plans.

CP giving supports persons, sup-

It's NO SECRET — the Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' way to the lost world.

Each year over 200,000 persons are baptized in more than 125 countries because you and your church support foreign missionaries through Cooperative Program giving.

...that whosoever ...
...ould not perish, but have eter...
16 "For God so loved the world, ...
...ave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,
baptizing them in the name
of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
— Matthew 28:19

17 For God sent not his Son into
world to condemn the world; but th...
...ough him might be saved
...believe in him

Gratitude — more than a word

"If you can read this, thank a teacher" was the admonition of a bumper sticker I saw recently. There have been teachers in all of our lives who made tremendous contributions.

Henry Adams said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." Graduation is near; school will soon be out for the summer. Some teachers will retire, some will return. We owe them a debt of gratitude. Most of us can relate to the following anonymous story:

Two middle-age men were chatting over their coffee. It was a dark, dreary day and one commented, "There sure isn't much to be thankful for."

The other said, "You're right, except maybe for Mrs. Pearson. She was my literature teacher and

made me appreciate Tennyson and really gave me a love for poetry. It has brought me a great deal of joy through the years."

"Did you ever thank her?"

"No, but maybe tonight I'll write her a note."

Two phone calls netted a current address for Mrs. Pearson and he wrote his belated note of gratitude.

A week later he received a letter. It read: "My dear Johnny, You will never know how much your letter meant to me. I am a lonely old lady now, living in a small room. Johnny, I taught school for 45 years, and your note is the first letter of appreciation that I ever received. It arrived on a dull, cold morning and cheered my lonely heart as nothing else has in many years. God bless you, Johnny. Yours truly, Mrs. Pearson." — GH

missionary team — partners with God.

But what can I do to help extend God's work?

First, I can recommit myself to God's work as revealed in the Great Commission.

Second, I can examine my giving. If it is unworthy of a Great Commission Christian, I can set a goal and make plans to reach it.

Third, I can ask my church's stewardship and/or budget planning committee to study our church's CP giving record and consider leading our church to a higher level of participation in God's

work through the Cooperative Program.

Fourth, I can study biblical truths of stewardship and missions.

Fifth, I can help my church decide to increase the percentage of its budget income through the Cooperative Program by sharing my understanding of and trust in CP giving.

Sixth, I can pray for missionaries and ministries supported through the Cooperative Program.

Seventh, I can vote for the CP on budget adoption Sunday.

Austin is vice president, SBC Stewardship Commission.

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Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference

Annual Meeting

June 13-14, 1993

Second Church, George R. Brown Convention Center,
Houston

Theme: "...Heal Our Land"

2 Chronicles 7:14

Sunday afternoon — Second Church, Houston

1:30 Musical Praise — Newsong, music evangelists, Atlanta
1:50 Prayer — Scott Rambo, associate pastor, First Church, Bossier City, La.
2:00 Message — Michael Hailey, pastor, First Church, Lakeland, Fla.
2:25 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables, minister of music, First Church, Bossier City, La.
2:30 Musical Praise — Joe Atkinson, music evangelist, Dallas
2:35 Message — Jay Strack, evangelist, Dallas
3:05 Prayer/Offering — Joe Tilley, deacon, First Church, Bossier City, La.
3:10 Musical Praise — Alan Green, music evangelist, Houston
3:15 Message — Harold O'Chester, pastor, Great Hills Church, Austin, Texas
3:45 Musical Praise — Newsong
3:50 Message — Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn.
4:20 Benediction — Shane Craven, pastor, Mt. Rachel Church, Dalton, Ga.

Sunday evening — George R. Brown Convention Center

6:00 Choral Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Bossier City, La.
6:15 Welcome — Fred Lowery, president, Pastors' Conference; pastor, First Church, Bossier City, La.
6:20 Scripture and Prayer — Wayne Dubose, pastor, Summergrove Church, Shreveport, La.
6:25 Choral Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Bossier City, La.
6:30 Message — Cal Thomas, columnist, Los Angeles Times Syndicate, Los Angeles
7:00 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables
7:10 Musical Praise — First Light Trio, First Church, Bossier City, La.
7:15 Message — John Maxwell, pastor, Skylane Wesleyan Church, Injoy Ministries, San Diego
8:10 Praise/Worship — Starlet Crosby Harbin, soloist, Snellville, Ga.
8:20 Prayer/Offering — Ken Alford, pastor, Morrison Heights Church, Clinton
8:25 Choral Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Bossier City, La.
8:35 Message — Jerry Vines, pastor, First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
9:15 Benediction — Sam Jones, pastor, First Church, Pittsburg, Texas

Monday morning

8:30 Musical Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Woodstock, Ga.
8:50 Scripture/Prayer — Landrum P. Leavell II, president, NOBTS, New Orleans
8:55 Praise/Worship — Keith Martin, minister of music, First, North Mobile, Ala.
9:00 Musical Praise — Keith Martin
9:05 Message — Danny Gray, pastor, Brushy Creek Church, Easley, S.C.
9:35 Musical Praise — First Light Trio
9:40 Message — Joe Brown, pastor, Hickory Grove Church, Charlotte, N.C.
10:10 Prayer/Offering — Michael Catt, pastor, Sherwood Church, Albany, Ga.
10:15 Musical Praise — First Church Ensemble, Bossier, La.
10:25 Message — Fred Wolfe, pastor, Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala.
10:55 Praise/Worship — Keith Martin
11:00 Musical Praise — Michelle Gage, soloist, Rodney Gage Ministries, Euless, Texas
11:05 Message — Rodney Gage, evangelist, Rodney Gage Ministries, Euless, Texas
11:35 Benediction — Cecil Taylor, pastor, West Monroe Church, West Monroe, La.

Monday afternoon

1:15 Musical Praise — Say So, singing group, Norman, Okla.
1:25 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables
1:30 Scripture/Prayer — Mark Brister, pastor, Broadmoor Church, Shreveport, La.
1:35 Musical Praise — Dave St. Andre, minister of music, First Church, Ruston, La.
1:40 Message — Ronnie Floyd, pastor, First Church, Springdale, Ark.
2:15 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables
2:20 Musical Praise — Pat Keith, soloist, First Church, Bossier City, La.
2:25 Message — Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor, New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga.
3:00 Prayer/Offering — John Yarbrough, secretary, Pastors' Conference; pastor, Tabernacle Church, Cartersville, Ga.
Musical Praise — Say So
3:10 Election of Officers
3:30 Message — Johnny Hunt, pastor, First Church, Woodstock, Ga.
4:05 Musical Praise — Mark Temple, soloist, Putnam City Church, Oklahoma City
4:10 Message — E.V. Hill, pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary Church, Los Angeles
4:45 Benediction — Michael Hamlett, pastor, First Church, Lakeland, Fla.

Monday evening

6:10 Choral Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Woodstock, Ga.
6:30 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables
6:35 Scripture/Prayer — David Hankins, pastor, Trinity Church, Lake Charles, La.
6:40 Musical Praise — Newsong
6:45 Message — Charles Lowery, pastor, Hoffmantown Church, Albuquerque, N.M.
7:25 Welcome — Edwin Young, SBC president; pastor, Second Church, Houston
7:30 Praise/Worship — Jerry Ables
7:40 Prayer/Offering — Ondi Brum, evangelist, Dallas
7:45 Musical Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Woodstock, Ga.
7:50 Message — Gary Smalley, president, Today's Family, Phoenix, Ariz.
8:30 Choral Praise — Choir and Orchestra, First Church, Woodstock, Ga.
8:35 Message — Charles Stanley, pastor, First Church, Atlanta
9:15 Introduction of New Officers
Benediction — New Conference President

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Grassroots WMU affirmation sought by five Baptist leaders

By Herb Hollinger

HOUSTON (BP) — A campaign to seek grassroots affirmation of the national Woman's Missionary Union was unveiled by five Southern Baptist leaders in a news conference held April 8 in Houston.

The teleconference call with Baptist state paper editors and other Baptist news media was hosted by Daniel Vestal, pastor of Tallowood Church, Houston.

Vestal and the four others representing the group said the aim was simple: to rally Southern Baptists to express support for the WMU, which they said is under attack by the conservative leadership of the SBC, in written forms which will be presented to national WMU leadership at its annual meeting in June in Houston.

The suggested four-paragraph resolution affirms the more than 100 years of WMU involvement in Southern Baptist missions and calls the WMU's "integrity of commitment ... unquestionable."

"Recently WMU has been subjected to alarming pressure to alter that which has served God so wonderfully well for more than a century," the form reads. "Further, it is shocking that abusive remarks made against the WMU have been spread on the pages of the nation's newspapers, both in secular and Baptist publications."

The form calls it "inconceivable" that anyone would question the WMU's intent or ability to expand its mission support. In January, the national WMU voted to expand its services to other evangelical groups but stopped short of promoting any mission offerings other than the SBC Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

WMU's action resulted in a resolution in February by the SBC Executive Committee calling for WMU to rescind its action and affirm its historic "auxiliary" position with the Southern Baptist Convention. The Home Mission Board voted in March to affirm the Executive Committee's resolution and several conservative SBC leaders have publicly decried the new direction of the WMU.

Morris H. Chapman, president of the Executive Committee, while on a trip in Texas, contacted by Baptist Press, said the committee's resolution was "nothing but affirmation of the WMU's historic

relationship with the SBC."

"The resolution expressed profound appreciation for the enormous contribution which the WMU has made to Southern Baptist mission efforts. I believe most Southern Baptists would wholeheartedly agree with that," Chapman said.

Vestal said his group is composed of "concerned Baptist people" and is not tied to any organization, such as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an association of moderate Southern Baptists critical of current SBC leadership. Nor, Vestal said, has the group been asked by the WMU to start the campaign on its behalf, although Vestal said he did advise Dellanna O'Brien, national WMU president, of the group's plan.

Participating in the teleconference call, in addition to Vestal, who is a leader in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, were: R. Quinn Pugh, executive secretary of the Baptist Convention of New York; Ellen Teague, president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention and on the special WMU committee which brought the recommendations adopted by the national WMU in January; P. James Flammig, pastor of First Church in Richmond, Va.; and J. Richard Maples, a Bryan, Texas, pastor and president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Although all five of the partici-

pants in the news conference gave glowing affirmations of support for the WMU, Flammig likened the current situation to when the WMU was formed in 1888 "here in Richmond." He said the men attending the SBC meeting in 1888 would not let the women participate so they went down the street to a Methodist church and formed the WMU.

"The issue (with the men in 1888) was control back then. And now it seems what the male-dominated, fundamentalist-dominated SBC leadership can't control, they want to destroy," Flammig told Baptist Press in a later telephone interview. He suggested recent published remarks by Adrian Rogers, Tennessee pastor and one of the leaders of SBC conservatives, that criticized the new WMU direction and suggested male leadership of the mission emphasis in local churches, were too critical.

"The WMU is doing a superb job and we need to leave them alone," Flammig said.

Vestal said a suggested form of affirmation or tribute is available through a toll-free number (1-800-580-7729) although he encouraged individuals, churches, associations, and state conventions to submit personalized affirmations as well.

Hollinger is director of Baptist Press.

Mississippi native Jon Singleton appointed by Home Mission Board

ATLANTA — Mississippi native Jon Singleton was appointed to mission service by the Home Mission Board in March.

Singleton will serve in San Diego where he will be a church starter strategist, and his wife, La Homa, will work in family and church service.

A native of Belzoni, Singleton is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla., and Midwestern Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

The Singletons have spent the last 13 years as church planters with the Foreign Mission Board in St. Lucia, West Indies. They have two daughters, Murah and Abanna Wade.



Jon and La Homa Singleton



Pianist Dino headlines event

Mississippi College's touring show troupe, The Naturals, will perform in the sixth annual Naturally Spectacular, April 17, 7 p.m., in Swor Auditorium on campus. Headlining the performance will be Christian pianist Dino, six-year winner of the Gospel Music Association's Dove Award for Instrumentalist of the Year. For information or ticket sales, call (601) 925-3248 or 925-3856. The Naturals are, left to right, front row: Tommy Creel, Prentiss; Wendy Champion, Clarksdale; Chad Logan, Cleveland; Cheryl Simmons, West Point; Steven Barnett, Clinton; Mary Greenlee, Clewiston, Fla.; Tim Moak, Bogue Chitto; second row, Melanie Barham, Ruston, La.; Jennifer Malone, Jackson; Mendy Sims, Richton; Mat Neal, Fort Collins, Colo.; third row, Charles McLendon, Richland; Berk Sauls, Clinton; Jamey Nettles, Jackson; John Bullock, Jackson; Brian Hilburn, Cleveland; Jay Taylor, Clinton; Clay Whittington, Richland; Andy MacDonald, Laurel; and Ben Buchanan, Indianola. They perform under the direction of Robbie L. Bell and Eva A. Hart.

Kazakh ministry needs performers

ALMA-ATA, Kazakhstan (BP) — Southern Baptist volunteers are urgently needed for a drama ministry in the Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan.

Four current drama team volunteers — engaged in mime, street theater, and dance and music performances — will complete their assignments in 1993. Members of a group called "Company International," they are stationed in Kazakhstan's capital city, Alma-Ata.

Drama training is not necessary but a college education and a willingness to perform are. Musical ability is helpful, though not required. Team member Kathy Abshire of Ringgold, La., said volunteers should be willing "to be stretched, to learn to do things they never did before, never thought they could do, and maybe really don't want to do."

Company International director Joel Heard of Lexington, Ky., has called the drama ministry in Kazakhstan "one of the greatest undeveloped ministry tools that we have."

Company International has performed for benefit concerts and cultural programs. The group performed for "Tomisha," a televised Kazakh celebration seen by about 30 million people.

The drama group's main project has been "The Tune," a 50-minute pantomime based on the Bible. New volunteers, the group hopes, will continue performing the pantomime, taking it to frontier regions throughout Kazakhstan.

The performers think the drama's main strength lies in the way it meets and reaches large numbers of people. They have received about 700 response cards. Individuals wanting more information are invited to more in-depth studies led by team members.

James Atherton, team member from Lexington, Ky., said the focus of their work has shifted. "Drama is no longer the focus," Atherton said. "The focus is discipling those who respond. You never do what you think you're going to do here. God is always full of surprises... what God has led us to do is infinitely better than anything we could have dreamed of."

For more information about the drama team request and other volunteer opportunities in Kazakhstan, contact Cooperative Services International, P.O. 6841, Richmond, VA 23230.

Texas CLC rejects restrictive revision of abortion statement

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (BP) — The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission at its quarterly meeting rejected a move to make the commission's 1992 statement on abortion more restrictive and approved a motion calling for expanded minority representation on the CLC.

The commission — the governing board for the Texas Baptist moral concerns and public policy agency — met along with its non-voting board of consultants April 1-2 at Bishop Mason Conference Center near Dallas.

With two dissenting votes and one abstention, the commission defeated a motion by Roger Deerinwater, pastor of First Church in Archer City, Texas, to revise the CLC position paper, "Abortion and the Christian Life," to bring it more in line with the stance of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. The vote came after a motion to table the issue resulted in a tie.

Deerinwater advanced the position that abortion should be considered only to save the life of the mother, and he proposed removing exceptions for cases of rape, incest, or severe fetal deformity from the CLC document.

The four-page statement, adopted last year, states, "Aborting the life of the fetus should be regarded as an extreme act undertaken under extreme circumstances."

Abortion might be chosen "as the lesser of evils" only in such cases as

rape or incest, pregnancies which severely threaten the mother's physical or emotional survival, or in pregnancies involving severe fetal deformity and disease incompatible with life, according to the CLC position paper.

"Every instance in which reverence for fetal life is set aside in behalf of reverence for the life of the mother is intended as an urgent exception to the basic aversion to abortion," the commission paper states.

Citing Psalm 139 as proof text for belief that protection for human life should begin at conception, Deerinwater maintained that the Texas CLC abortion statement "ignores the sovereignty of God in birth and conception."

Any exception for severe fetal deformity is "saying that God made a mistake in the womb" and opens up the possibility of elective abortions for convenience, he said.

George Mason, pastor of Wilshire Church in Dallas, warned against building a systematic theology around a single, poetic passage of Scripture.

"To be consistent in that approach to interpretation, you would also have to conclude that God ordered the systematic slaughter of people," Mason maintained.

Deerinwater countered his view of God's sovereignty also includes God's prerogative for judgment and wrath, saying, "If you go wrong in

that, you go wrong in your theology."

"No," Mason replied, "If you go different in that, you go different in your theology."

Deerinwater's original motion was that the Texas CLC change its abortion stance "to move into agreement with the position of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission."

"Why not leave the Southern Baptist CLC out of it?" suggested G.A. McGee, pastor of Bellview Church, Midland, Texas.

Deerinwater reworded the motion, proposing instead the Texas CLC state as its position that abortion should be considered as morally viable only when performed to save the life of the mother, not considering any exceptions for rape, incest, severe fetal deformity, or emotional trauma to the mother. McGee seconded the restated motion.

Men have no business drafting position statements on issues exclusively affecting women, according to Cassandra Northcutt of First Church of Longview.

"Let the women write the position papers on abortion," said Northcutt. "You can't really speak until you have walked in someone else's shoes. And you men will never be able to walk in a pregnant woman's shoes. It's not in your makeup."

Camp is director of public relations, Baptist General Convention of Texas.

New Orleans Seminary marks 75th anniversary

New Orleans Seminary, Southern Baptists' third oldest seminary, marks its 75th anniversary during the 1992-93 academic year.

Voted into being by the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans in 1917, it was the first theological institution to be created by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bearing the name Baptist Bible Institute until 1946, the school was actually the fulfillment of a century-old dream of Baptists in the South. In 1817 Cornelius Paulding, a wealthy New Orleans businessman, first proposed the establishment of a missionary training school at the "gateway to Latin America."

A response came with action in 1914 following an impassioned edi-

torial written by Plautus Iberus Lipsey, editor of the Baptist Record.

"A seminary (in New Orleans) would plant the Baptist cause in this city in a way that would immediately command the attention and the respect of all," Lipsey wrote. "It would be planting the siege guns at the enemies' gates. It would rally the Baptists and put heart into them and equip them for their work as nothing else could."

Following unanimous SBC approval in 1917, the Convention instructed both its Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board to cooperate with the Mississippi and Louisiana Baptist state conventions in the establishment of a theological school in New Orleans.

The institute opened its first session in October 1918 under the leadership of Byron Hoover DeMent, who served as president of the Baptist Bible Institute from 1917 to 1928.

Others who have served as president of the school are: William Wistar Hamilton Sr. (1928-42); Duke Kimbrough McCall (1943-46); Roland Quinche Leavell (1946-58); Henry Leo Eddleman (1959-70); and Grady Coulter Cothen (1970-74). The current president, Landrum Pinson Leavell II, nephew of Roland Leavell, is in his 19th year of service at NOBTS.

Smith goes to Simpson Association

Farris W. Smith, a native of Griffin, Ga., will be moving to the Simpson County Baptist Association as director of missions April 19. He is married to the former Gaye Alford of Tyler-town. He is a graduate of Mississippi College, and received the master of theology and doctor

of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary.

Smith has pastored churches in Mississippi since 1969 and currently serves as pastor of Unity Church, Picayune. Other pastorate include: First, Magnolia; Center Ridge, Yazoo City; Shady Grove, Hazlehurst; Magee's Creek, Jayess; and West Poplarville, Poplarville. He also served an extended interim pastorate at East Union Church in Pike County.

The Smiths have three children: Michael, 23, a senior at Mississippi State University; Mandy, 20, a sophomore at MC; and Macy, 17, a student at Picayune Memorial High School.

Buckley gives nomination info

Gerald Buckley, chairman of the Committee on Nominations, requests nominations of qualified Baptists for boards and commissions of the Mississippi Baptist Convention be mailed to him at Petal Harvey Church, 600 S. Main St., Petal, MS 39465-2236, or to the Office of the Executive Director, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Forms may be obtained from the office of the executive director, and should be mailed no later than Sept. 3. Boards and commissions of the Convention are: Board of Ministerial Education, Christian Action Commission, Education Commission, Historical Commission, Baptist Children's Village, Baptist Foundation, Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc., Blue Mountain College, Mississippi College, William Carey College, and Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Missionary's commitment makes lasting impression on writer

By Susan Doyle

BANGLADESH (BP) — The woman who kept her face hidden beneath her sari haunted Barbara Joiner during the two-day women's conference.

When the Bengali woman finally spoke on the last day of the meeting, what she shared was the best example of mission action Joiner says she has ever heard.

The Bengali woman began to tell Joiner of a Hindu man in her village who had a stroke. He is bedridden and cannot feed himself, she said.

People in the village have given up on trying to feed him because it becomes such a messy ordeal when eating the Bengali way — using one's fingers.

The woman told her, "I have a spoon. Every day I take my spoon, and I go over and feed him his curry. I make sure every drop of it goes into his mouth and not on his face."

The story of servanthood — and that spirit of humility — made a lasting impression on her. A widely known author and conference leader, Joiner was in Bangladesh to spend a month with Southern Baptist foreign missionary Gloria Thurman. Joiner is writing a biography about Thurman and her

work in Bangladesh.

"While I was in Bangladesh, I was asked to help with a women's conference," Joiner said. "The women came from more than 20 churches. They each brought one sari (dress) which they washed in the scummy pond where they also bathed. They slept on the floors. They brought their babies.

"They came hungry to learn. Only three in the group could read. The rest were learning Scripture by heart."

Joiner had been asked to give three 15-minute devotionals. With half of the time spent in translating, "It wasn't very much," she said.

But during the conference, Thurman told Joiner that one of the Bengali women somehow knew Joiner had written *Yours for the Giving*, a book about spiritual gifts published by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

"She said, 'Ask Barbara if I have the spiritual gift of mercy.'"

Joiner asked Thurman to have the woman explain why she thought she had the gift of mercy. That's when the woman told the story of feeding the Hindu man.

Joiner asked Thurman to tell the Bengali woman, "You have the

most beautiful gift of mercy I have ever heard."

Joiner learned firsthand what it is like to eat curry every day, to be offered fish heads as the guest of honor, to wear a sari and keep it draped gracefully on.

Most of all, she witnessed Thurman's commitment to Christ, and says she now better understands the urgency to write a book about Thurman and the need for a Christian witness in Bangladesh.

Former missionary Betty Rains told Joiner she felt that if a biography was written about Southern Baptist missionary Gloria Thurman, it might encourage others to go to Bangladesh to work.

Rains felt strongly that God could use a book of Thurman's life to call others to the predominantly Hindu country. She also felt that Joiner should write the story only after spending at least one month with Tom and Gloria Thurman.

"Obviously God wanted me to write this book," Joiner said.

WMU will release the book, titled *Gloria!*, Aug. 1. The book will be featured at WMU week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center Aug. 21-27, with the Thurmans and Joiner on the program.

Doyle writes for WMU.

Baptist state papers must regain status as forum for debate of issues

By Jack E. Brymer Sr.

During its annual meeting in mid-February, the Southern Baptist Press Association (SBPA) took some unusual steps to shake off a decade-long decline in circulation and begin to reestablish Baptist state papers as the forum to debate issues confronting state conventions as well as the Southern Baptist Convention.

For the first time in its history, the SBPA has employed an executive director, Lynn Davis, to direct the association's efforts toward that new beginning. Davis is a former state paper editor and retired recently from the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The efforts of the SBPA to reestablish Baptist state papers as the forum to debate issues confronting state and national Baptists are long overdue. Practically every belief Baptists hold dear emanates from the importance of the individual. Freedom, soul-competency, autonomy, priesthood of the believer — all herald the crowning jewel of creation.

In recent years, we have seen these historic concepts abused and blatantly ignored under the banner of "conservative resurgency." There are ever-increasing signs that what is taking place is not so much a conservative resurgency as it is a theological redirection of who we are as Baptists.

For example, association and state convention leadership, duly elected by messengers from local

churches, are no longer the primary sources for recommendations of persons to serve our national convention's agencies and institutions. Rather, a cadre of persons often unknown to associational and state leaders, but with ties to well-placed national figures who in many cases have no elective nor legitimate authority, is the source for persons to serve at the national level. Such practices may be constitutionally correct, but they seriously violate the spirit of cooperation and local accountability which are of historic importance to Baptists.

Now comes an announcement that the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee will produce its own national newsmagazine. Such a move mandates that our many voices as autonomous Baptist state editors be heard more often and more clearly on issues which are of vital importance to individuals, local congregations, and associations of Baptists.

It is not mandatory that we all sound the same note! In Baptist life, harmony is a sweet sound but you don't get it with everybody singing the same note.

Baptists would benefit significantly more from a spirited discussion of the issues between state paper editors than a monologue of selected spokesmen from any camp. For our strength as Baptists is not in our volume but in our variety. Our clout is not in our big-

ness but our boldness.

The SBPA must find new and creative ways to strengthen the individuality and uniqueness of each editor and publication. If we are not in continual pursuit of excellence in our calling/profession, then we let others and/or circumstances set our priorities. And that is insubordination because it is editing by default rather than design which makes us less than what we were called to be as editors.

Let us be judged by the challenges we define for ourselves rather than the conflicts we avoid. Let us cease explaining to each other our differences and begin to chart a path of understanding which may help us discover some elements of basic unity built on truth which could serve as the building blocks for common action.

Let us give up our search for political and/or theological correctness. Rather, let us pursue truth. If that comes from the right, then so be it! If from the left, then so be it! For if it is truth, no matter the source, it is of God.

Autonomous state papers and editors have served Baptists well since their beginnings. We must once again recapture the forum for the debate of issues of concern to all Baptists.

Brymer is editor, *Florida BAPTIST WITNESS*, in whose April 3, 1993 issue this editorial first appeared.

Thursday, April 15, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

Southern Baptist Church Music Conference

Annual Meeting

June 13-14, 1993

Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston

Theme: "Find Us Faithful"

Sunday afternoon

1:15 Registration opens

1:45 Piano prelude — Gerald Aultman, associate professor of music, NOBTS, New Orleans

Opening hymn

Call to order — Bob Hatfield, president, Church Music Conference, minister of music, Dawson Memorial Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Greetings — Damon Shook, pastor, Champion Forest Church, Houston

2:15 Concert — Texas Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Band; Loyd Hawthorne, director of choral activities, and Scott Mather, director of bands; both of Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, Texas

3:00 Exhibit break

3:30 Concert — Second Voice, Second Church, Houston, Matt Marsh, associate minister of music, director

4:00 Special Interest Groups: Drama in Worship, Instrumental Music for the Church, Favorite Anthem Reading Session

5:00 Dismiss

Sunday evening

6:45 Pre-Service Concert — Sanctuary choir, Hyde Park Church, Austin, Texas, Joe Carrell, minister of music, director

7:00 Worship with Champion Forest Church — Russell Dilday, president, SWBTS, preaching; Bob Hatfield, music

Missionary Testimony/Prayer Time; Drama vignette

8:15 Reception — hosted by Church Music Department, BGCT

Monday morning

8:45 Concert — Handbell Choir, First Church, West Monroe, La., Lonnie Stewart, minister of music, director

9:15 Organ Recital — Al Travis, professor of organ, SWBTS

9:45 Exhibit break

10:15 Concert and choral demonstration — Houston Children's Chorus, Steve Roddy, director

11:15 Annual business session

12:00 Dismiss

Monday afternoon

1:15 Arkansas MasterSingers and Arkansas Singing Women, Lester McCullough, director of church music, Church Music Department, Arkansas Convention, director

2:00 Divisional meetings: election and special interest sessions

3:30 Exhibit break

4:00 Christine Anderson and the Medallion Ringers, First Church, Houston

4:30 Concert — East Texas Baptist University choir, Charlie Fuller, director of choral activities, East Texas Baptist University, Marshall, Texas

5:00 Dismiss

Monday evening

7:00 Pre-service concert — Champion Forest Church choir and orchestra, Michael Burt, minister of music, director

7:15 Heritage Night — Russell Dilday, preaching; Bob Hatfield, music

8:45 Recognition of outgoing officers; introduction of new officers; presentation of Hines Sims Award and Honorary Life Memberships

9:00 Benediction

NOBTS' Center for Church Growth hosts Coleman, conference

Pastors, church staff members, and laymen are invited to attend a one-day conference entitled "Making Disciples Through the Local Church," Friday, April 23, at the Center for Evangelism and Church Growth on the campus of New Orleans Seminary.

Guest speaker will be Robert Coleman, a teacher, speaker, and writer in the fields of discipleship and evangelism. Over 4.5 million copies of his book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, have been distributed in 85 languages. He has

also written *The Master Plan of Discipleship and The Mind of Christ*.

Cost for the conference is \$20; spouses may attend free. Those who register by noon, Wednesday, April 21, may attend the conference for \$15. NOBTS students may attend for \$10.

For more information, contact the Center for Evangelism and Church Growth, New Orleans Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126; or call (504) 282-4455, ext. 3320.

capsules

REIGHARD TO BE NOMINATED FOR PASTORS' CONFERENCE: ATLANTA (BP) — Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor of New Hope Church in Fayetteville, Ga., will be nominated by Jerry Vines as president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference when the conference holds its annual session in June. Vines, pastor of First Church of Jacksonville, Fla., and a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Pastors' Conference, said, "I feel a liberty from the Lord" to nominate Reighard. Vines said Reighard, who has served the Fayetteville church for 17 years — 15 as pastor — "is a fine young pastor with a real ministry to young people who has built a strong and growing church. He is a Bible-believing, soul-winning, young preacher."

REFUGEE SPONSORS SOUGHT FOR SOMALIAN REFUGEES: SAN DIEGO (BP) — To most Americans, Somalis are starving people on the other side of the globe. To Eric and Linda Berquist, Somalis are friends living in the apartment complex down the street. At least 5,000 Somalis are expected to come to the United States this year. Refugee resettlement coordinators predict the refugees will resettle in cities across the nation. For example, at least 200 Somalis are expected in Atlanta by September. To the Berquists — he is a graphic artist and she is director of extension ministries for Del Cerro Church in La Mesa, Calif. — the influx of Somalis is an opportunity to share Christ with an unreached people group. The *Encyclopedia of Christianity* reports that 99.8% of Somalis are Muslim, and foreign mission work in Somalia is limited. Somalis' "healthy resistance" to Christianity makes sharing Christ with them difficult, Berquist said. Many Muslims equate Christianity with pornography, alcoholism, and other vices they associate with America and "Christian" countries, he explained. The Berquists have established relationships with the Somalis by being good neighbors.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PRAISES BAPTISTS' DISASTER RESPONSE: JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — The immediate response of Southern Baptists to Hurricane Andrew's devastation of south Dade County has been cited by the April issue of *National Geographic* magazine. In an article, "Andrew Aftermath," senior assistant editor Rick Gore tells of returning to the "ruins south of Miami" to examine the damage and efforts at aid and reconstruction. The Fort Lauderdale native tells of "seeing care ladled out by Southern Baptists" at a Florida City church. "The Baptists, renowned for feeding disaster victims from mobile kitchens, were perhaps the first Samaritans on the scene." Noting the mobile kitchen operated by the Tennessee Baptist Convention has been cooking 4,000 hot meals a day, Gore adds it is about to be relieved by a Kentucky unit that can fix 8,000. Gore tells of traveling with Jacksonville youth minister Jeff Revels to feed a "largely forgotten niche of victims — those who live in the hard-to-reach regions near the Everglades." "We were here before the Red Cross," the article quotes Revel as saying. "If they are hungry, we feed them."

MISSIONARIES GAIN LEGAL STATUS TO OPERATE IN RUSSIA: MOSCOW (BP) — The Russian government has granted Southern Baptists the legal right to operate in Russia as a nonprofit religious organization. The new status clears the way for missionaries to buy and sell property, hire people, and bring whatever they need into the country. It was approved just weeks after 20 Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to republics of the former Soviet Union met for the first time and formed the Commonwealth of Independent States Mission (organization of missionaries). At that two-day meeting in Moscow, missionaries elected Norman Lytle, Gadsden, Ala., as their coordinator. Until last fall Lytle directed the Baptist conference center in Israel. He began his missionary career in Israel with his wife, the former Martha Yocum, Louisville, Ky., in 1964. Twelve Southern Baptist missionary families are assigned to the Commonwealth of Independent States now, including seven in Moscow. Others are in Belarus and the Ukraine. Still others will transfer into Latvia, Estonia, and Siberia within months. Southern Baptists have built up personnel in the region since the Soviet Union broke up in 1991. More than 90 other Southern Baptist workers who practice professional skills throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States are not connected with the new mission.

Book Reviews

Through the Tears: Caring for the Sexually Abused Child, by Karen Cecilia Johnson (Broadman, 190 pp.; 1993.)

The author tenderly and thoroughly addresses this delicate issue. From warning signs to appropriate actions to take, to the effect of abuse on the family, this book speaks to both Christians

and non-Christians, directing them to look to the Lord for comfort and guidance. Johnson writes: "The way to wholeness is often through brokenness. When life as you want it to be breaks apart, only God can re-create it as he knows it should be."

— Reviewed by Kathie Perrett, WMU, MBCB.

College coeds devote their Friday nights to homeless

By Elaine Herrin Onley

ATLANTA (BP) — Each Friday night, two college freshmen drive 80 miles to Atlanta.

After driving from the north Georgia mountain town of Cleveland, where they attend Truett-McConnell College, to a downtown Atlanta parking lot, Sharon Griffin and Marsha Lewis join 30-40 other volunteers, including some students from other area colleges.

Once assembled, the group prepares for the night's ministry from 8 to 11 p.m.

An outdoor soup kitchen is set up where they serve food donated by local restaurants and stores, churches, and individuals. Typically they serve hot dogs, donuts, and hot chocolate in the winter. Cold drinks are served in the summer. "There is also clothing distribution with goods provided by local stores — discontinued lines and items that do not sell," Griffin explains.

While Griffin stays with the feeding and clothing program, Lewis, who has been with the ministry longer, joins with those who go in groups of four to six and "hit the streets." They distribute tracts, share their Christian faith, and tell hungry, homeless people along the way that "hot food and warm clothes" await them at the corner of Spring and Luckie streets.

Why would two Baptist college students, who could be doing something else with their time, commit their Friday nights to the street ministry among a sprawling city's homeless? "Why?" Griffin ponders only a moment. "Because I feel a real need to get in this world and do something. I went the first time because I had a curious need to check this out. One visit and I realized that I took so much for granted — my home, a warm bed to sleep in ... I'll never take my warm bed for granted again."

Lewis's experience has been similar, but for other reasons. Born to a single parent and given to her grandmother to be raised, growing up in a dysfunctional situation with great personal need herself, she lived from one "pity party" to the next. "I always felt sorry for myself. I thought I didn't have much. Then one night in ministry among the homeless really opened my eyes! I realized the desperation of those people," Lewis adds boldly. "Now I'm not allowed to feel sorry for myself. I know how much I do have."

Griffin's involvement in the outreach was kindled in her Baptist Student Union, when she heard some students talk about programs for helping the homeless. "Something inside me made me follow up on this afterward. I began to ask questions and learned that there was a program Friday nights in the Techwood area in Atlanta where I could help."

The Stockbridge, Ga., student said she immediately felt drawn to the ministry, but "I knew that I needed a strong person to go with

me." She learned that another freshman, Lewis of Bremen, Ga., was already actively involved, "so she was my 'strong person' who could help me get started."

Exchanging the 300-acre mountainside campus in the Blue Ridge mountains for several night hours on the streets of Atlanta already has had a profound influence on the two coeds.

Lewis, a theatre major who wants to work in the field of special education, has learned "I have a heart for the homeless. I learned homeless children cannot go to school because they don't have a permanent address." Becoming a Christian at age 9 charted the course for her life and she says she would have been "on the streets, barefoot, pregnant, and on drugs — in that order — had not the spirit of Christ

been in my life to turn me in the right direction. That's the only way I can explain why I made the choices I did."

The girls have seen firsthand the plight of the homeless: hunger, lostness, confusion, pain, AIDS, addiction, and extreme loneliness.

Griffin explains, "...you never get over it once you actually are in the midst of it. For me, I feel good about myself, knowing I have at least done something." A pre-law student who plans to go into some area of criminal justice, she offers encouragement to anyone who may want to join them on Friday nights. "You may not be able to help everybody, but for certain you can help somebody."

Onley is director, Truett-McConnell College's office of college relations.

CLear-TV calls for boycott of Johnson wax company

By Louis Moore

NASHVILLE (BP) — Christian Leaders for Responsible Television, nicknamed CLear-TV, has called for a one-year boycott of S.C. Johnson and Son, Inc., a Racine, Wis., corporation that markets a variety of waxes/polishes and household/personal products, because of the company's sponsorship of prime-time television programs that feature sex, violence, and profanity.

CLear-TV is composed of more than 1,000 Christian leaders from about 100 denominations. The organization in the past has initiated boycotts of other TV advertising sponsors it has deemed to be sponsors of sex, violence, and profanity on prime-time TV.

Richard D. Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission and a member of the CLear-TV's executive committee, is urging Southern Baptists to join in the boycott of Johnson.

Billy A. Melvin, chairman of CLear-TV, said representatives of his organization have asked to meet with representatives of the Johnson Company but have received no response.

"We are disappointed that a company so clearly identified with household products would, in a cavalier and flagrant manner, sponsor TV programs that are helping to destroy important family values and the quality of life we enjoy in this country," he said.

Among television shows pinpointed by CLear-TV as examples of Johnson-sponsored programming that is unsuitable was the Oct. 19, 1992, showing of "Love and War" on CBS, the Oct.

29, 1992, showing of "Top Cops" on CBS, the Nov. 4, 1992, showing of "Law and Order" on NBC, and the Nov. 14, 1992, "Columbo Cries Wolf" movie.

These are the products Christians are being asked to boycott:

Personal — Agree shampoo, Aveeno bath products, Curel skin lotion, Edge shaving cream, Fisher Price bath products, Halsa shampoo and conditioner, Off insect repellent, Soft Sense lotion.

Household — Drano drain opener, Favor polish, Glade room deodorizer, Glory rug cleaner, Mr. Muscle oven cleaner, Pledge Dusters, Rain insecticide, Shout stain remover, Step Saver cleaner, Toilet Duck cleaner, Vanish toilet cleaner, Windex glass cleaner.

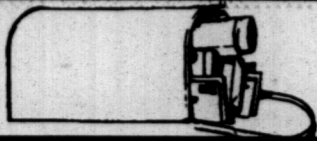
Waxes and polishes — Bravo wax, Brite floor wax, Clean & Clear wax, Future floor coating, Glo Coat floor coating, Johnson Wax, J-Wax, Klear floor coating, Pledge wax, Pride wax.

Moore writes for CLC.

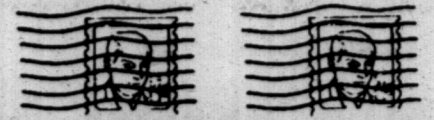


...FOR
SUCH A TIME
AS THIS.

ESTHER 4:14



Letters to the editor



Letters to the Editor policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. (Often we receive wonderful letters with no signatures. Please sign these letters; our readers need these messages.) No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

In special instances, when identifying the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the writer's name will be withheld.

All correspondence is subject to editing. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

No more than one letter will be printed during a 3-month period from any individual. Each correspondent must include an address and the name of his or her church.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with that subject will be terminated.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

Extravagant costs

Editor:

Please let the readership know the total costs of the missions-seminary-Sunday School Board "extravaganza" being projected for the Houston convention in June. It is difficult to tabulate final costs from the information received thus far, and as far as I am aware, no final figures have been released as yet, but piecing together what slim information has reached the public seems to indicate that the figure could run in excess of \$100,000 or perhaps much more. Maybe a better name for this event would be "Extravagant Experiments?"

Jerry Vardaman
Starkville

Editor's Note: The evening extravaganzas will be presented June 15 and 16. The amount is ambiguous. The seminaries, mission boards, and the Sunday School Board will contribute the \$100,000 (plus) required.

Christian principles

Editor:

Is America a Christian nation? J. Brent Walker's negative answer based on American history cries out for rebuttal.

A study of the writings of our founders reveals that an overwhelming majority were evangelical Christians, meaning that they professed Jesus Christ as their Savior. Further study of these writings concerning the entire colonial era, including the Declaration of Independence, the Revolution, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights reveal divine intervention at crucial points in answer to prayer, without which we would have no nation. One of many examples would be the escape of Washington and his troops when they were trapped on Long Island. In short, without God's direct intervention, not once but many times, there would be no America. To assert that these experiences were lost on our founders when they began to write the Constitution and Bill of Rights is absurd.

The crucial point that needs amplification here is based on the reason colonists came to America in the first place — religious freedom. The language of the First Amendment was designed to prevent a government mandated religious denomination (like the Church of England) — NOT to separate government and Christian

principles.

Patrick Henry said it best, "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ!" Therefore, perhaps in the way that matters most, American history fairly shouts that, "YES, we are a Christian nation!" This cannot be denied on historical grounds, even though legal and judicial interpretation of our Constitution in this century has turned from the intent of our founders, setting the stage for and underpinning the moral decline of recent years.

Therefore, American Christians, your heritage is clear. And not one principle, rightly applied, does any harm to another's faith or relegate any to "second-class citizenship."

Davis Guy McAduy
Lucedale

Comic strip indicative

Editor:

I was appalled at the news on one of the television stations last night as to a comic strip about homosexuals being published in the *Clarion-Ledger*. The *Clarion-Ledger* went on to say even though other papers would not continue to carry it, they would nevertheless continue it through its six weeks run.

It is beginning to look like we as Christians have somehow lost our way as good Christian soldiers, who according to the Bible should have girded our loins and gone into battle before now.

We just might try cutting some subscription funds from the great *Clarion-Ledger* empire. I, for one stopped subscribing to their paper several years ago simply because they only print one-sided views and values. Now they have decided to take up the battle for yet another outrageous view. I can assure the paper that I, as a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother have prepared all the children in my family with something in their head besides "conformist brains." I may be called a "bigot," but then I will be in some of the best company this state and country has to offer.

All Christians should now come together to not only fight this blight on our nation, but all the others that seem to be cropping up like popcorn since we decided to knuckle under like a bunch of "cowards" to the "powers that be."

Sir, I am angry and I do think

that others should be angry, too. I refuse to believe to the bottom of my soul that our Lord and Savior intended for us as Christians to sit idly by and allow the enemy to run over us.

Name withheld by editor

Our fate revealed

Editor:

As the Southern Baptist "Contention" nears, I have a prayerful suggestion for those who will be attending, as well as those of us who will remain at home.

Throughout the 55 years I have been a Southern Baptist, there has been an increasing reluctance to study the book of Revelation. The reasons given are: "too deep for me," "it's scary," "too many interpretations," and so forth.

There is, however, a part of Revelation that needs no exegetist, interpreter, or expositor. That is the second and third chapters, which contain Christ's message to the seven churches. One might argue that they applied only to those churches of that age. Not so! They are as applicable today as they were then, as is the remainder of God's Holy Word.

All of us need to read carefully and reflect prayerfully on each of these seven letters. By doing so, we will learn why and how we are failing to carry out the Great Commission, and why we have largely sat back and watched as our nation has fallen into a state of moral turpitude unmatched by anything since the fall of the Roman empire.

Question: Will the Southern Baptist Convention continue as a force for spreading the gospel, or will it enter the 21st century as an anachronism of times past, spiritless and defeated?

J.B. Morgan
Long Beach

Division is enemy

Editor:

I wish to write in response to the "Hard-wire Rogers" letter in the March 25 issue. In as Christ-like and humble a manner as I can master, I wish to point out that this is one more example of Satan in Christianity today through the spirit of division and criticism.

When will we learn that our enemy is not those who proclaim Christ as the Savior of the world, but that our battle is with Satan, sin, and self. We are a called-out people who are commanded by Christ to love one another (John 15:17). In point of fact, Jesus said that men would know us as his disciples by the love we had one to another.

The Lord Jesus Christ admonished the 12 not to stop those who cast out devils in his name because "he that is not against us is for us" (Luke 9:50). The 12 had stopped a man from doing God's work because he was not of their fellowship. We must recognize that Christianity is not the SBC or Methodist or Pentecostals or Catholicism, but is Christ. Our only example is Jesus and his teachings are law to the believer. Love is the foremost char-

acteristic of the true Christian and obedience to God's Word is the mark of a born-again believer. We must be one — unified in Christ under the direction of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God the Father.

This letter is offered not to harm the writer of "Hard-wire," but to show all believers the depth of sin that has grown up in the modern church with all the division and criticism of today. We are here to do two works for God: preach the gospel to all the world in words and deeds and in the life we live; and help carry our brother's or sister's load and make their journey easier, if at all possible.

Let us stop the division of God's people and pull together for the glory of him.

Jim Flake, pastor
Bethlehem Church
Ackerman

Gospel, not politics

Editor:

Thank you for your editorial on "The Mid-Stream" (Baptist Record, April 1). Your comments were really appropriate. As you said, "Extremism is hardly enhancing the work of Southern Baptists."

Why can't our churches get on with preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ without marring the effectiveness of the message by references to the controversy going on in the Southern Baptist Convention?

I want to hear a good sermon without any comments about fundamentalism/conservatism or CBF (any discussion of these should be reserved for meetings called for that purpose). I want to leave the church inspired, and saying, "It was good to come to the house of the Lord."

I do not believe the church pulpit (or, for that matter, the local church publications) should be used as a political forum, not even for the politics of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Sula Johnson Marsalis
Meridian

Ridgecrest reunion

Editor:

We are planning a Ridgecrest staffers reunion in 1994 and are attempting now to update our files on former summer staffers.

We are asking former Ridgecrest staffers to send us their names and addresses and those of other staffers they may know.

This information should be sent to: Administrative Services Coord-

inator, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, P.O. Box 128; Ridgecrest, NC 28770; phone (704) 669-8022; or fax (704) 669-9721.

G.W. Lankford, director
Ridgecrest Conference Center

Price for abortion

Editor:

I'm writing about an issue that greatly concerns me and that issue is abortion. I feel that abortion is wrong. I also believe it is a sin and an abomination before God. The Bible plainly states, "Thou shalt not kill."

Now, some people wonder just exactly when the soul enters the body. I think I can bring this to light. When someone dies, the soul leaves the body. That body can't think, eat, breathe, feel, or move around. For there to be life, there has to be a soul. On the other hand, for an embryo or fetus to grow and develop, there has to be life. And if there is life, there has to be a soul.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in the book all my members are written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Psalm 139:13-16).

God knows us all before we are ever placed in our mothers' wombs. He knows who we are, what we will look like, how we will behave. He knows all about us even before we are fully developed. And our soul comes from God. He is the giver of life, and he alone should be the taker of life.

As you can see, God has some pretty strict rules concerning little children. Children had a special place in his heart when Jesus was here on earth; and his love for them hasn't grown any weaker over the years. Shouldn't we have that same love? Or have we grown so inhuman that we are willing to kill an entire generation for the sake of convenience? People say that a woman has a right to do as she pleases with her own body. Again, God says no. He also has strict rules about fornication and adultery, as well as abortion.

When moral issues turn into fatal acts, guess who pays the price? We all do.

Bob Leach
Blue Springs

GA/Acteen camp registration

Registration has begun at Camp Garaywa for GA camps and Acteen mini-camp, and at the WMU office for Acteen mini-camps at Central Hills this summer.

Registration forms for these camps were included in the "1993 Happenings in Woman's Missionary Union," a book mailed in February to WMU directors, Acteen directors, and GA directors.

If you cannot locate this book and need camp registration forms, call the WMU office at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, (601) 968-3800, or Camp Garaywa, (601) 924-7034.

Just for the Record



First Church, New Albany, held its Acteen Recognition Service with the theme "Becoming" on Feb. 14. Pictured, front row, are Kim Pounders and medallion bearer Lori Goudelock, D'Anna Bennett and medallion bearer Katie Hall, Lee Ellen Didier and medallion bearer Phillip Chapman, Molly Crews and medallion bearer Mary Katherine McClinton, Susan Autry and pin bearer Annah Ayres, and Kathy McGill and pin bearer John Spencer.

Second row, left to right, are Jill Rhodes and crown bearer Bridget Stanford, Dianne Owen and crown bearer Allison Hodges, Rebecca Grace and crown bearer Melissa Grace, Elizabeth Crews and crown

bearer Mark McClinton, Carrie Feather and crown bearer Phillip Naney, Heather Still and scepter bearer Kelsey Still, Angela Barkley and scepter bearer Ashley Williams, Ginger Grisham and scepter bearer Kyle Kimbrough, Jennifer Cook and scepter bearer Stacy Stepp, Hollie Dulaney and pin bearer Keely Gault, Amy Rhodes and pin bearer John Mark Skinner, Jamie Morris and pin bearer Rob Tucker, Heather Brown and pin bearer Katie Campbell, Shannan Foster and pin bearer Lauren Still, and Emily Tarrant and pin bearer Claudia Still. Back row, leaders are Judy Brown and Nancy Grace, Jeff Crews and Randall Feather, escorts, and Jane Didier and Jane Goode, leaders.



Harmony Church, Union County, has remodeled and enlarged its sanctuary and increased the seating capacity to 300. Chandeliers and new furniture were added to the sanctuary; a sound room and a new sound system were also added. An additional one-acre parking lot was paved. Dedication services were held Nov. 22. Robert L. Daniel is pastor.

Blue Mountain College will hold its Alumni Day April 23, beginning with registration at 9 a.m. Don Baggett, pastor of Belden Church, will be the speaker for chapel at 10:30 a.m. A business meeting will follow at 10:45, and luncheon at 12:30 p.m. Keynote speaker will be Steve Bennett, pastor of Colonial Hills Church, Southaven. Music will be provided by the College Men's Trio. A golf tournament will wrap up the afternoon.

Brewer Church, Richton, held ground breaking on March 22 for its \$49,000 fellowship hall. Michael R. McLendon is pastor.

Through the Bible Basic Study will be taught at Hebron Church, Grenada, by Keith Powell, pastor. The 26 week course begins May 6 and tuition is \$35. Classes will meet each Thursday from 7-9 p.m. Call 226-6773 or 226-2085 for more information.

First Church, Kosciusko, will host a Singles Night, Saturday, April 17. Linda Spencer of Nehemiah Ministries, French Camp, will present a concert, and a fellowship time will follow. For more information, call the church at (601) 289-5575. David Hulsey is minister of education, Carolyn Hulsey is singles director, and Barry Corbett is pastor.

The Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission will sponsor a workshop July 16, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Mississippi College Library. This workshop is geared toward churches celebrating significant anniversaries in 1993-95, and will include a complimentary luncheon. Richard Etheridge, president of the commission, will lead participants in learning to write church histories and plan anniversary celebrations. Registration deadline is May 1. Contact the Historical Commission Office, Box 51, Clinton, MS 39060; telephone (601) 925-3434.

Day of prayer May 6, 1993

Thursday, May 6, marks the 42nd observance of the National Day of Prayer.

Meet Mississippi First Lady Pat Fordice on the steps of the Capitol in Jackson at noon to unite in prayer. Mrs. Fordice asks Mississippians to join her in thanking God for his blessings, and asking him to give those in authority wisdom and guidance, and to acknowledge dependence on the Lord.

Personal intercession for local, state, and national leaders can make a difference.

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CBF of Georgia adopts bylaws, elects officers

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. (ABP) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia gained official standing March 20 as 550-600 people adopted a set of bylaws for the group.

The meeting was held at Smoke Rise Church in Stone Mountain.

The group has organized over the past year as the state affiliate of the national Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Fellowship is composed of moderate Southern Baptists who disagree with the current conservative direction of

the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bylaws for the CBF of Georgia call for a slate of officers as well as a coordinating council, which will conduct business of the organization between meetings.

Officers, elected at a November meeting and reaffirmed as part of the adoption of bylaws, are Billy Nimmons, pastor of First Church in Dalton, moderator; Pearl DuVall, member of First Church of Cordele, vice moderator; and John Baker, pastor of Druid Hills Church, Atlanta, clerk-treasurer.

Mt. Zion marks 150 years

Mt. Zion Church, Columbus, will celebrate its 150th anniversary April 18, beginning with Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.

Morning worship will begin at 10:30 in the new sanctuary, the fourth in the same location in the church's history. Both the morning and evening worship services will be broadcast on WJWF 100 FM, a local radio station.

Lunch will be served at the church at noon, followed by a display. Discipleship Training will be held at 6 p.m. Evening worship services at 7 will be under the theme "150 Years of Music."

Ralph Windle is pastor; David Watson is minister of music.

Former missionary to Guam Binion Fleming dies at age 62

PALMER, Texas — Retired Southern Baptist missionary Binion Fleming, 62, died of cancer March 31 in Palmer, Texas.

Fleming, who served as an English-language pastor in T a m u n i n g , Guam, was named a missionary in 1984

with his wife, the former Pattie Murphy of Bibb County, Ala., and retired in April 1992.

Born in Amite County, Miss., Fleming graduated from Northeast Louisiana State University, Monroe, La., and from New Orleans Seminary. Before missionary service, he was chaplain in the U.S. Army and pastor of churches in Alabama, Montana, Washington, and Arkansas.

He is survived by his wife and two grown children.

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THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Purvis, Mississippi (P.O. Box 246, zip 39475) is presently receiving resumes for the "full-time" position of minister of music/education.

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FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH, Grenada, is seeking a full-time music and youth staff person. Resumes should be sent to, Friendship Baptist Church, Search Committee, 476 Pearridge Road, Grenada, MS 38901, phone (601) 226-4658. Pastor is Rev. Guy Hughes.

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THE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH in Columbus, Miss., is presently looking for a part time minister of music and youth. Any individual who is interested should mail a resume to: Community Baptist Church, Search Committee Chairman, 2490 Yorkville Road East, Columbus, MS 39702 or they may call 327-5306 or 328-2105.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Purvis, Mississippi (P.O. Box 246, zip 39475) is presently receiving resumes for the "part-time" position of minister of youth. (Weekends/possible Wednesdays during the school term: 30 hours per week during the summer months)

Revival Dates

First, Magee: April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 nightly; Garland McKee, director, Evangelism Department, MBCB, evangelist; Brad Jones Family, Meridian, music; Oliver Ladnier, pastor.

Arbor Grove, Houston: April 18-23; 7 nightly; Edward Knox, Antioch Church, Columbus, evangelist; Arlie Holloway, music; Ron Harrison, pastor.

Canaan, Columbus: April 18-21; Rex Yancey, pastor, First, Pascagoula, evangelist; Jerome Key, minister of music; Ben Yaber, pastor.

Tinsley (Yazoo): April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Joe Wright, Benton, evangelist; R. Scott Savell, pastor.

Magnolia (Lowndes): April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. each night; Bill Franks, New Salem, Columbus, evangelist; Burt Damron, New Salem, Columbus, music; Jim Cooper, pastor.

Chunky, Newton: April 18-22; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. each night; Mike Ragland, Siloam, York, Ala., evangelist; Peter Fairley, Clarke-Venable, Decatur, music; Wayne Campbell, pastor.

Baxterville (Lamar): April 18-23; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Harliss Grice, Picayune, evangelist; Jim Hayes, Hattiesburg, music; Tommy Odom, pastor.

South Side, Meridian: April 18-22; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., noon and 7 p.m.; Jimmy Porter, evangelist; Phillip Willis, music.

Juniper Grove, Poplarville: April 18-21; Argile Smith, assistant professor of preaching at New Orleans Seminary, evangelist; Ken Gabrielse, First, Kenner, La., music; Phil Hanberry, pastor.

West Poplarville, Poplarville: April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. each night; Billy Dowdy, pastor, West Union, evangelist; music; Greg Green, First, Poplarville, and Michael Ball, director, Baptist Student Union, Pearl River Community College, Don Windham, pastor.

First, Maben: April 18-21; Sunday, 10:55 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon., 7 p.m.; Tues. and Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Gary Bowlin, Brandon, evangelist; Jim Keyser, minister of music, First, Calhoun City, music; Randle Poss, pastor.

Bethel, Columbus: April 19-22; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Carroll Roberson, Ripley, evangelist; Kirk Chapman, Bethel, music; David Brooks, pastor.

Poplar Flat (Winston): April 18-21; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Tommy Anderson, Emmanuel, Pearl, evangelist; Betty Cockrell, Poplar Flat, music; Dwayne Kelly, pastor.

Crestview, Petal: April 18-23; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-

Fri., 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Glenn Davis, pastor, First, Sumrall, evangelist; Brad Griffin, minister of music, Crestview, music.

County Line, Overt: April 23-24; Jimmy Knight, evangelist; Bobbie Smith, music; Marvin Dean, pastor.

Locust Street (Pike): April 18-21; Jeff Steele, pastor, Kennedy Springs, Magee, evangelist; Danny Creel, Locust Street, music; services, Sunday, 11 a.m., old-fashioned singing with "The Steeles" at 2 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; J. Frank Smith, pastor.

Antioch (Simpson): April 18-23; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m. Carey Paul Douglas, Wesson, evangelist; Dusty Rhodes, Antioch, music; George Lewis, pastor.

Short Creek (Yazoo): April 16-18; The Jim Hill Family; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday service at 11 a.m., covered dish lunch at noon, 1:30 p.m. service; Norris Ables, pastor.

First Church, Winona: April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon luncheon and 7 nightly; Doug Broome, Waynes-

boro, evangelist; Paul Koonce, Hattiesburg, music; John L. Walker, pastor.

First Church, Lake: April 18-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 nightly; Sonny Adkins, Forest, evangelist; Joe Vance, Newton, music; Ken McLemore, pastor.

Bethany Church, Prentiss: youth revival; April 16-18; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, regular services; Buddy Keyes, Laurel, evangelist; Gerry Meador, Laurel, music; L.C. Anthony, interim pastor.

Names in the News

Winnie Henson Lazenby, born July 14, 1912 in Toccopola, Miss., died March 30 in Fort Worth, Texas. She was the widow of Claude Lazenby, former minister, who died in 1986. After living most of their lives in North Mississippi, the Lazenbys retired in 1985 and moved to Crowley, Texas, near Fort Worth. She is survived by a daughter, Anita Westmoreland and two granddaughters, all of Fort Worth; two sisters, Eufaula Ross, Tupelo, and Evelyn Aldy, Vancouver, Washington; nieces and nephews including Jane Demaree, Clarksdale.

Doug Spires, Clinton, will be presented with Pam McNutt of Montgomery, Ala., in a joint senior voice recital, on April 19 at 3 p.m. in Spell Auditorium of Provine Chapel, Mississippi College. Spires, son of Jerry and

Joyce Spires of Clinton, is a student of Richard Joiner, professor and head of the Department of Music. He is music director at New Zion Church, Crystal Springs.

ATLANTA (BP) — The board of directors of The Christian Index elected **Clarence E. Drummond**, director of the Special Missions Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention, as interim editor March 31. He will serve until a permanent replacement is found for editor R. Albert Mohler Jr., who recently was elected president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Drummond, 55, will join the Index staff May 1, and will take over full editorial responsibilities after Mohler leaves the position May 31.

John W. Pace, minister of music at Arrowood Church, Meridian, was ordained to the evangelistic gospel preaching ministry March 21. In addition to his duties at Arrowood Church, Pace is a music evangelist and a mental health counselor at East Mississippi State Hospital, Meridian.

David Wyatt Young has joined the faculty of the Winters School of Music at William Carey College as professor of music and coordinator of the Instrumental Program. Young goes to Carey following a tenure at Jones Junior College where he was director of bands. He is presently serving as minister of music at West Laurel Church and serves as South Mississippi director for the Mississippi



Young

Singing Churchmen.

Scott Hilton of Laurel and **Micah Necaise** of Bay St. Louis, Carey College students, will represent Mississippi at the National Leadership Conference of Phi Beta Lambda business honorary in Washington, D.C. in July. Hilton's area of competition is management; Necaise's, public speaking.

Bennie Crockett of William Carey College's philosophy and religion faculty, **Howard Keever** from music, and **Beth Richmond** of the education faculty have been granted tenure. The award of tenure is the highest honor that a college can bestow on a member of the faculty. **Al Foy** in education and **James Shivers** of the business faculty, as well as Crockett and Richmond, were promoted to the rank of professor. **Jeff McLelland** in music and **Daniel Browning** in religion received promotions in rank to associate professor.

Paul B. Williamson Jr., former director of missions for Attala Association, is available for supply or interim pastor. He can be contacted at 713 Valley Road, Kosciusko, MS 39090, phone (601) 289-7870.



Margaret Palmer, widow of Deacon Guy Palmer, was honored on March 14 at First Church, Holly Springs, for her services as church organist for over 50 years under eight pastors. She was presented a large print hymnal with her name imprinted as organist emeritus by Robert Williams, minister of music. An afternoon reception was held in fellowship hall for her. Her four daughters and their families were present.

Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church

110th Anniversary

April 25, 1993

Highlights of the day include:

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
Pictures will be taken of all Sunday School classes

10:45 a.m. Worship
Speaker: Dr. Bill Causey, former pastor and Executive Director of MBCB

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- * Tour our new and renovated facility

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To love is to serve



By Chuck Pourciau
John 21:12-22

The death and resurrection of Jesus brought about a radical change in the lives of the disciples. Jesus was no longer the continuous physical presence he had been before. He appeared to them from time to time and they were certain he was alive, but what were they to do now? Evidently they went back to doing the things they did before Jesus called them to be his disciples, because, in John 21, they were fishing when Jesus approached on the shore. It is in this meeting that Jesus gave them a clear mission for the future.

Jesus invited the disciples to breakfast (vv. 12-14). After a long night of fishing, Jesus invited these disciples to have breakfast with him. Even as the risen Lord, Jesus desired to serve the disciples and have fellowship with them.

There are many respected positions of leadership in the church. The devil would love for Christians in leadership positions to think more highly of themselves than they ought. Thus we are tempted to become arrogant and forget our primary responsibility toward others: service.

Jesus probed the depth of Peter's commitment (vv. 15-17). The account then focuses on Jesus' three-fold questioning of Peter. It must be remembered this questioning came fresh on the heels of Peter's three-fold denial. The thrice-repeated denial may have contributed to the thrice-repeated question of Jesus. Jesus then challenged Peter to translate his words of love into deeds of love by challenging him to feed the Lord's sheep.

How deeply do we love the Lord? If the preacher asked us if we loved Jesus, we certainly would respond in the affirmative. But how often do we translate that affirmative into actions? Jesus was being certain that Peter and all believers understand that words of love are empty if not backed by deeds of love.

There is another very significant truth in this interaction between Peter and the Lord. Peter had just denied the Lord three times, but the Lord did not hesitate to reinstate him into ministry once he had been forgiven. Peter expressed his love and Jesus immediately said, "Feed my sheep." How often do we disqualify ourselves from ministry opportunities because of past failures? The Lord's only concern with your past failures is to forgive you when you confess them. Jesus is more concerned with future service than past failures. Don't look to your past. Look to the Lord.

Jesus prophesied Peter's death (vv. 18-19). Peter earlier had denied Jesus out of fear. Jesus indicated that he would overcome even the fear of death in the future. Peter would one day suffer the same kind of death suffered by the Lord. He would indeed have come a long way from denial of the Lord to being willing to follow him to his death. Peter's only concern was to be the final two words of Jesus in verse 19, "Follow me."

Jesus does not promise us prosperity and comfort here on earth. He wants us to focus on one thing, following him. His gift of eternal life should be reason enough to do that. Also, if you are ashamed of how you've failed Jesus in the past, take heart. Peter denied he even knew Jesus during the night before the death of Jesus. Yet he later was willing to follow Jesus all the way to his own death.

Jesus instructs Peter concerning the fate of the beloved disciple (vv. 20-22). Since Jesus had given insight into Peter's future martyrdom, Peter wanted to know about the beloved disciple. Jesus essentially told him that was no concern of his. He needed to concern himself with following the Lord.

Some ministry tasks are viewed as more glorious than others; this view can lead to jealousy. The words of Jesus to Peter are spoken to anyone who is tempted to be jealous of another believer. We must concern ourselves with one thing and one thing only, following Jesus. We should be serving for God's glory, not ours.

The death and resurrection of Jesus did bring about a radical change in the lives of the disciples. In a similar way salvation brings about radical change in the life of a Christian. He is often found asking the question, "What next?" Whether he is a new Christian or a very mature one, the answer is the same: Follow Jesus.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

Bible Book

God's intervention



By Guy A. Hughes
Isaiah 7, 9

One of the few wholesome television programs today is "Rescue 911." So, almost every Tuesday night our family takes in one hour of watching how others handle moments of crisis. Our favorite episode involves the young man who managed to get his tongue stuck in the freezer compartment of the refrigerator. The 911 operator had a hard time comprehending the address from his immovable tongue.

Running a close second was the incident in which a leaking gas furnace exploded, while a father was lighting it, critically burning his two children. Severely disfigured, they wore masks to school. We were moved when a closing scene showed father, mother, and the two veiled children holding hands while thanking God for his blessings. Their faith was holding firm in a time of crisis.

How would a person ever know whether his faith was weak or strong unless it has been tested? All men need a faith that will not shrink when washed in the waters of affliction and adversity. God's people soon learn he "is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

Judah's fear in a crisis (7:1-2). Ahaz, one of Judah's wicked kings, ruled between 735-715 B.C. He was the son of Jotham, and the grandson of Uzziah. Both Jotham and Uzziah worshiped Jehovah, however, both did not take away the high places at which the people sacrificed to other gods. This compromise led to moral failure within the family and weakened the country. Assyria was the superpower in the world and had forced Syria, Israel, and others to pay high taxes. In an effort to be free, Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, and the Philistines formed a military alliance against Assyria. They sought to enlist the country of Judah but Ahaz refused to join. Israel and Syria decided to attack Judah. Their plan was to overthrow Ahaz and force the nation to comply with the alliance. The news was so terrifying to Ahaz and the people they shook as the trees are moved by the wind (v. 2). As a result, Ahaz appealed to mighty Assyria for help.

God's offer of a sign to Ahaz (7:10-17). God's message to Ahaz came through the prophet Isaiah. He told him not to worry. God would defend Jerusalem. The Lord requested for Ahaz to ask for a sign. Ahaz refused to ask for a sign. Under normal circumstances Ahaz's thinking would have been correct. Jesus cautions us against sign seeking (Matt. 12:39). However, in this case, God commanded Ahaz to ask for a sign. Ahaz was disobedient and Isaiah rebuked him (v. 13). God gave him a sign anyway. A virgin would conceive and bear a son. This concept of a virgin birth is a cornerstone of biblical Christianity. Only if Jesus was truly God the Son could he have lived a sinless life and died on the cross as the sacrifice for mankind's sins. The name Immanuel means "God with us". Is it not wonderful to know God's presence is assured towards us in moments of crisis? God sent Isaiah to assure Ahaz of his presence and to ask him to trust in him for his deliverance. We also have many such opportunities to respond in faith.

God's promise of light for his people (9:2). In moments of crisis, we always long to see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. In this verse God promises the dark days will give way to the light of God's love and mercy. The gospel of John depicts Jesus as the fulfillment of this verse when he penned, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1:4-5). Dark days grow bright when we face them with Jesus.

God's promised deliverer described (9:6-7). The kingdom God was preparing was not one familiar to Ahaz, Rezin, or Pekah. God's King would come as a child and would grow up to deliver God's people from a more terrible bondage than high taxation or foreign domination. God's desire is to deal with man's sin problem from which all the evils of society take root. The ruler to come would be a Wonderful Counselor! The word counselor literally refers to "one called alongside." Anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved or rescued from the dark world of sin. He is ready and willing to answer our plea for help. He will then usher us to his kingdom, a place of safety and refuge.

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

Life and Work

The Spirit's power



By Laura Russell
Acts 2:1-6, 11b, 15-17, 32-33

Today's lesson gives us an eyewitness account of the flame and fire, or the birth and spread of the church. Beginning in Jerusalem with a small group of disciples, the message traveled across the Roman Empire. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the courageous band preached, taught, healed, and demonstrated love wherever God sent them, and lives and history were changed.

The coming of the Spirit (vv. 1-3). Held 50 days after Passover, Pentecost was also called the festival of weeks. It was one of three major annual feasts, a festival of thanksgiving for the harvested crops. Jews of many nations gathered in Jerusalem for this festival.

The Holy Spirit came 50 days after the crucifixion, and he came with sound like a mighty wind and tongues like fire. The wind is a symbol of the Spirit's power and invisibility. Tongues symbolize speech and the communication of the gospel. "Divided tongues" means the fire separated and rested on each of them. Fire symbolizes God's purifying presence, burning away the undesirable elements of our lives. On Mt. Sinai, God confirmed the Law with fire from heaven (Ex. 19:16-18). At Pentecost, God confirmed the Holy Spirit's ministry by sending fire. At Mt. Sinai, fire came down on one place; at Pentecost, fire came down on many believers, symbolizing that God's presence is now available to all who believe in him.

The empowering by the Spirit (vv. 4-6, 11b). As the Holy Spirit was given to men, the disciples were baptized and at the same time filled with the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to join the people of different racial and social backgrounds into one body — the body of Jesus Christ. The speakers at Pentecost were given the ability to literally speak in other languages. This was a miraculous attention-getter for the international crowd gathered in town for the feast. All the nationalities represented recognized their own languages being spoken. But more than the speaking drew people's attention; they saw the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Jews who responded to the message returned to their homeland with God's good news of salvation. Thus God prepared the way for the spread of the gospel.

The explanation related to Joel's prophecy (vv. 15-17). Peter had been an unstable leader during Jesus' ministry, letting his bravado be his downfall, even denying that he knew Jesus. But Christ forgave and restored him. This is a new Peter, humble but bold. His confidence comes from the Holy Spirit, who made him a powerful and dynamic speaker. Peter tells the people why they should listen to the believers: because the Old Testament prophecies had been entirely fulfilled in Jesus, because the risen Christ could change their lives.

Not everything mentioned in Joel 2:28, 29 was happening that particular morning. The "last days" include all the days between Christ's first and second comings. "The Lord's great and glorious day" (2:20) denotes the whole Christian age. Even Moses yearned for the Lord to pour his spirit on everyone (Num. 11:29). At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was released throughout the entire world. Now everyone can receive the Spirit.

The explanation related to Jesus' ministry (vv. 32-33). The resurrection of the Messiah, foreseen by the psalmist, could now be declared genuine by the experience of the apostles. Jesus had not only been raised from the dead; he had also been "exalted at the right hand of God" and had poured out upon his people the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' physical presence left the disciples when he returned to heaven, but the Holy Spirit came to comfort them and empower them to spread the gospel of salvation. Today Jesus' work of salvation is completed, and he is sitting at God's right hand, where he has authority over heaven and earth.

When the Holy Spirit works, there is movement, excitement, and growth. He gives us the motivation, energy, and ability to get the gospel to the whole world. We are God's people, chosen to be part of his plan to reach the world. In love and faith we have the Holy Spirit's help as we witness or preach. How are you fitting into God's plan for expanding Christianity? Ask God how you should serve him, then obey.

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Jan. 31, 1993**

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(to be continued)



Under the direction of Mr. Mike Lenoir, the Jackson Chapter of Magnolia Chorus performed for staff and children on the India Nunnery Campus of The Baptist Children's Village. It was a delightful evening enjoyed by all.

Evaluating "revelations" —

Davidian confrontation raises issue of what Baptists believe

By Paul E. Robertson

First in a series

Recent confrontations with the Branch Davidians in Texas bring to the forefront numerous issues that are relevant for Christians today. I want to address one of those issues — evaluating "revelations." How do we evaluate the claim of David Koresh that he has received revelation from God regarding his identity as Christ and the end times?

Throughout history there have always been groups claiming to have special revelations regarding the end of time. As we approach the end of this century, there is little doubt that we will find ourselves faced with numerous persons and groups claiming similar "revelations." Professing to have the answers, to know the times, and even at times claiming to be the Christ, they will clamor for our attention and our allegiance. Some will include violence in their agendas. More will use hyper enthusiasm to make money off of naive Christians through the sale of charts, books, and so forth. It would be advisable for them and us to remember Jesus' own words in commenting on the second coming: "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone" (Matt. 24:26, NASV). Commenting on those who always seem to know about the coming destruction, he said, "See to it that no one

misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many" (Matt. 24:4a-5, NASV).

Although most of us quickly dismiss so-called revelations such as those of David Koresh, this does surface the issue of evaluating more common claims to revelation. Most of us are confronted with "revelations" from our own church members. They are not as dramatic oftentimes, but they come to us with the same authoritative claim. For instance, we have all heard a member of our church assert in a business meeting, "God has told me that such and such is what the church ought to do." It is said with the authority that it is a revelation from God.

Sometimes we readily dismiss these suggestions, realizing they come from fanatics. But other times, knowing how to respond is not so easy. The "revelation" may come from our pastor, a deacon, or any sincere and well-meaning member.

How are we to evaluate these "revelations?" How are we to know what to do? In formulating an approach, I would like to locate the issue in the broader theological principles related to the Christian doctrine of revelation. Then, in the next article in this series, I will sug-

gest some practical principles for sorting through "revelations."

The word "revelation" means an unveiling or a disclosure. In a theological perspective, it refers to God's communication to persons of the being of God or divine truth. Apart from God's act of revelation, the character and intention of God would be guesswork. There is a hiddenness of God. Unless God

all persons through the world of nature, providential care, human consciousness, and religious consciousness. This seems to be what Paul refers to in Romans 1:20: "For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse" (NASV).

In Psalm 19, the psalmist declares that the created universe embodies a revelation of God. (See also Job 36:24-37:24; Ps. 97:6; Rom. 2:14-16; Acts 14:17; 17:26-28.) Without going into detail, we can say that such revelation is valid but not sufficient for humankind's religious life. It only gives us a partial picture of God. For instance, from general revelation we learn nothing about important issues such as the Incarnation, the Trinity, or the virgin birth.

Special revelation is the unique self-disclosure of God through various modes, including divine speech, actions in history, and the Incarnation. Although there are disagreements among Baptists as to some of the technical dimensions of special revelation, we would all agree that Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation. The writer of Hebrews said, "God after he spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the world" (1:1-2). In Jesus, all revelation is comprehended and summed up.

Of course, the Bible, for Baptists at least, has held a unique place in the matrix of special revelation. To quote from *The Baptist Faith and Message* (1963 version), "The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of himself to man."

With the coming of Christ and having the testimony of scriptures, Baptists traditionally have affirmed the sufficiency of Scripture. By that we have meant that we affirm that the church needs no other revelation. The canon of Scripture is complete. The message it contains is sufficient for the ongoing life and proclamation of

the church. All that we need to know regarding God's will for salvation, faith, and life is stated expressly in or inferred from Scripture.

Two more phrases often appear in Baptist discussions of revelation — inspiration and illumination. Inspiration refers to God's working through the biblical writers to provide an authentic text. Biblical texts such as 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21, and Acts 1:6 affirm inspiration. It points to God's authorship of the Scriptures and affirms the trustworthiness of the text.

Illumination is that influence of the Holy Spirit under which the people receive, discern, and feed upon the truths of Scripture. B.H. Carroll once gave this summary: "There are three terms — revelation, inspiration, and illumination. Revelation discloses that which we do not otherwise know. Inspiration infallibly records it. Illumination causes us to understand" (*Inspiration*, 60-61).

Thus, as Baptists, we have said we need no new revelation. The ultimate self-disclosure of God has occurred in Jesus Christ and the witness to it has been preserved faithfully in Scripture. Thus, insights we get today, we usually refer to illuminations rather than revelations. But many, including some Baptists, will want to use the term "revelation" today. I will be using the term "revelation" (in quotation marks) interchangeably with illumination in the next article in this series.

Already, you can begin to see a basic principle that will help in interpreting "revelations" that are brought to our attention. We have no need of further revelation in the technical sense. Jesus has come — we have the inspired Scripture.

But we still have those contemporary "revelations" or illuminations. What about them? Next week, I will offer some practical suggestions.

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"See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.... But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

should decide to let us know his nature, we would not know him. Fortunately, God has chosen to reveal.

In theological discussions it is customary to distinguish general revelation and special revelation. General revelation is that self-disclosure of God that is available to

New series offers biblically based sex education for children, youths

Parents and churches sometimes struggle with appropriate ways to guide their children in the area of sexuality. The new Christian Sex Education Series provides resources for educating children and teenagers about sex. The series, designed for parents to use in the home and for churches to train parents, deals not only with biological and physiological factors but also with Christian values and ideals for relationships.

This new series —

- * assists parents in rearing mature, responsible children and youths who apply biblical principles of sexuality;
- * promotes abstinence, chastity, healthy self-esteem, and self-discipline among children and youths;
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- * teaches children and youths an appreciation for their bodies as created by God and a responsibility to maintain boundaries in relating to others.

Resources provided in the series are listed below. Church leaders will want to order the indispensable *Christian Sex Education: Parents and Church Leaders Guide*, which teaches parents how to educate their children in the home and guides churches in supporting and training parents in this task. Biblical foundations are presented by a Bible scholar, while child development is discussed by a well-known pediatrician. Specialists offer valuable instruction for parents of young children, middle-age children, preadolescents, and adolescents.

Christian Sex Education: Parents and Church Leaders Guide defines the church's role in sex education as training and encouraging parents to take the responsibility of guiding their children in this area. The book describes a two-hour parent-orientation meeting. Suggestions for supplementary group study

sessions for preadolescents and adolescents are also provided for church leaders who wish to work more closely with parents in providing sex education for these age groups.

Don't let your church's children and teenagers fall prey to society's lies and pressures. Choose these Bible-based resources to educate children and teenagers about sex. All the books in the series can be purchased as "Christian Sex Education Set." Parents can use the set throughout their children's development, and church media libraries and church-staff members can refer to the set as a resource when ministering to families.

Books in the Christian Sex Education Series:

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- * *Sex! What's That?* by Susan Lanford (for preadolescents, item 7807-43, \$6.99)
- * *Sexuality: God's Gift* by Ann Cannon (for adolescents, item 7808-43, \$6.99)
- * *Celebrating Sex in Your Marriage* by Dan and Sandra McGee (for married couples, item 7809-43, \$8.99)
- * *Christian Sex Education: Parents and Church Leaders Guide* by Jimmy Hester (item 7810-43, \$7.99)
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Order materials from the Customer Service Center, 127 Ninth Avenue, North; Nashville, TN 37234; phone toll free 1-800-458-2772; or visit a Baptist Book Store.

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